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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Why Nonconformity?

The *Christian World*, the most representative of the Free Church weeklies in this country, published in its issue of February 22 a significant article by the Rev. D. W. Langridge entitled 'Why Nonconformity?' All students of our English Church History know the answer to that question, but it is not historical information that Mr. Langridge is in search of. What he is concerned to enquire is, why Nonconformity should continue to exist? He points out the deadly peril in which Christianity finds itself to-day owing to the attacks of the New Paganism abroad and at home. He recognizes that the many divisions among Christians contribute not a little to the weakness of Christianity in the face of this peril. In England any effective effort to secure the revival of the religion of the nation is thwarted by lack of Christian Unity. In view of such a situation, he asks, is the maintenance of Nonconformity either 'expedient or right'? He is convinced that many of his Free Church brethren share his doubts. He writes:

> 'The younger men and women in our churches, and most of all the keenest, most serious and most conscientious among them, simply do not care. They have no interest and see no meaning in denominationalism. By sure instinct they know that the real battle rages to-day in quite other directions and is waged upon totally different issues. Their membership of a Free Church is almost entirely an accident; a matter

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of family tradition and early association. About Christianity itself they care, I believe, more deeply than we suppose, but about ecclesiastical affiliation they care precisely nothing. And it would appear that what is true of the rank and file is true of our leaders also. From time to time a letter appears in the columns of the Press on some social, political, economic or international issue, gambling, temperance, refugees or some public question of that sort. The Archbishops sign first; then, almost invariably, follow the signatures of responsible Nonconformist leaders. Could anyone name any great civic or international issue in the life of to-day on which these eminences are divided. Differences there are and always will be among free men—it is the glory of democracy — upon all manner of questions, Socialism and individualism, pacifism and non-pacifism, and so on; but the line of these healthy differences runs not between any two Churches but athwart them all. In this similarity of standpoint and in this identity of witness we all, I believe, rejoice. Why not, then, take the next step?'

This next step, in Mr. Langridge's view, is the incorporation of the various Free Church Communions within the comprehensive membership of the National Church.

'Dare anyone look beneath the surface and then tell us plainly, tell us precisely and tell us publicly, what vital Christian truth, what precious value of the Gospel itself stands stubborn and obstinate in the way of reunion?'

'. . . Unless rumour grievously errs, there is within the authoritarian Church itself a fine anarchic diversity of interpretation and practice, broad, generous, liberal, and even rebellious enough to satisfy us all. Within itself the State Church differs more than it differs from us and far more than we differ among ourselves. Let us be blunt. It is not these things at all but quite other and different things, things more vague, subtle and entangled, things more social than theological, things more of this world than of the next, which keep us apart to-day.'

'. . . Time was when we disdained an Established Church. Now we are proud of it. Heathenism has returned to Europe. Great Powers, some honestly and some dishonestly, are flaunting their atheism. We rejoice to belong to a nation avowedly, legally and officially Christian. It is at least arguable that our position as Nonconformists should be modified in this new situation. We should bend our utmost effort to the strengthening and sanctifying of the soul of the nation. In England there is a powerful spirit of latent and unconscious Christianity. It is seen in our devotion to peace, our insistence on justice, our detestation of cruelty, our respect for law, our love of liberty, our slow but certain pressure towards social reform. The fields are white to harvest. The unconscious needs to be made conscious.

A reunited Church would be a shock and an inspiration. It would draw the attention of the nation to the Church and it would revive and recreate the Church herself. A great Church of the whole people, doubled in its membership, trebled in its influence, enriched in its scholarship and eloquence, deepened in its devotion and piety, a Church resolute and joyful in its newly-found unity, might prove to be just such a spiritual dynamic as our nation needs.'

These signs of a change in the attitude of Nonconformists to the National Church ought to awaken a warm response on our side. If reunion is to be achieved, the difficulties which Nonconformists themselves have to overcome within their own ranks are great indeed, and will demand from them a largeness of outlook, tolerance and patience which nothing less than the most ardent desire to secure reunion can supply. On our side the difficulties are not less formidable. Evangelical, Liberal-Evangelical, and Modernist Churchmen would make the largest concessions to secure such reunion. Liberal Anglo-Catholics, we believe, would do the same, but there is a very strongly organized, resolute and able body of Anglo-Catholics whose whole aim is to abolish the distinction between the Reformed Church of England and the Church of Rome with the purpose of securing finally the incorporation of the former within the latter. These Churchmen are resolved to concede nothing to the Nonconformists in the interests of reunion.

Our desire is that reunion should be, as far as possible, reunion without tears, and that all who are loyal in the widest sense to the principles and practice of the Church of England should find their spiritual home in it. But this policy of comprehensiveness, while providing a place for the most rigid Anglo-Catholics within the Church of England, cannot on the one hand concede to them the right to restrict the comprehensiveness of the Church to their own dogmatic, liturgical, and disciplinary limits, nor, on the other hand, concede to them the right to determine the policy of the Church of England in relation to our fellow-Christians in this land who, though of us, are not yet with us.

Once again in this hour of Christian crisis we would plead with our Church authorities to hold out the right hand of fellowship to our Nonconformist brethren in this land, and to make three concessions which will demonstrate to them our readiness to receive them into our Christian fellowship; if they on their part, forgiving much and forgetting much, can bring themselves to respond to our invitation. These concessions are:

(1) That our Church should welcome to our services of the Holy Communion all those who are communicants in every Christian denomination in this land.

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(2) That all Cathedral authorities and incumbents of parishes should be authorized at their own discretion to invite into their pulpits ministers of any Christian denomination.

(3) That in the present 'Declaration as to Qualification for Church Electoral Roll' the following words should be excised: 'and do not belong to any religious body which is not in communion with the Church of England.'

This would enable Nonconformists to become practising members of the Church of England without necessarily relinquishing their membership in their particular denomination. These three concessions are practical, and they could all be made with the minimum of delay and difficulty if our Church authorities really have the will to make them. The plea that such reforms should be postponed until after the war will carry no weight with those who used the period of the Great War to secure the Church reforms advocated by the Life and Liberty Movement. Indeed, war-time is a more propitious time for religious reformation than the drowsy periods of peace.

The Need for 'a simple statement.'

The notable article on 'Religion and the Nation,' published in the *Times* of February 17, and on which we commented in our March issue, has had numerous repercussions. Amongst other things, it has raised the question: What is the Christian religion that must be taught if the nation is to be delivered from paganism? Mr. Guy Kendall, formerly Headmaster of University College School, London, in a letter to the *Times* of March 6, raised this issue:

> 'Most of your correspondents speak as though the teaching of the Christian religion were quite a simple matter involving no great difficulties. It is true that the issue before the world at the present time is mainly one of Christian ethics. The main principles of Christian morality have been bred in the bone of Europeans for centuries and are below the threshold of consciousness except when they are brought to light for the purpose of challenging them, as in Germany to-day. But the Churches will certainly not assent to a view which regards the Christian religion as a system of ethics and no more; and rightly, I think. It implies certain beliefs as to the nature and constitution of the universe; and directly we get beyond questions of conduct we are confronted to-day by serious difficulties. Is the teacher of religion to be committed to all the intricacies of the conciliar theology?
>
> Headmasters know well the hesitation of those who are asked to assist in the teaching of Scripture or "divinity." "What are we to

> say about miracles?'' is the kind of question they are asked. And what are they to say? The Archbishops' Commission did not speak with a certain voice about these matters. If it were possible for the reformed Christian Churches (I naturally exclude the Roman Catholics, who feel no doubt about these matters) to agree to a simple statement of the principles to which they think every teacher of the Christian religion must assent—the Kingdom of God in the light of the Logos doctrine, for example—it might be possible to reduce these difficulties to a minimum. But can they?'

This practical proposal is surely worth considering. We know that many traditionalist Churchmen will reply, there is no need to compose such 'a simple statement' as Mr. Kendall desires. We already have such a simple statement in the Apostles' Creed. On the other hand, we all know that in the light of our modern outlook, both on the past and on the future, the use of this Creed bristles with difficulties, and that Churchmen who have no objection to repeating this Creed in church, find it extremely unsuitable as a basis for the Christian instruction of the young. In the teaching profession the vast majority would be most definitely opposed to making the Apostles' Creed the basis for instructing the young in the Christian religion, partly because of what they regard as the dubious or controversial character of some of its statements, and partly because it seems to them to be too archaic and unpractical in its presentation of the Christian religion.

We are sure that a definition of essential Christianity both in faith and practice, acceptable to the vast majority of educated Christian people as a basis for the teaching of the Christian religion to the young, could be drawn up by our Christian leaders of all denominations, if they had the will to do it. If our Christian leaders cannot agree, it is hopeless to expect those under them, whether schoolmasters or parents, to unite in a common effort. There are many such simple statements in existence, and probably all that our Christian leaders would have to do would be to agree on the one to be selected. It might be best to attempt this first before resorting to original composition. There is good reason for believing that even the Creed of the Council of Nicaea was not composed by that body, but that the Council made use, at least to a very large degree, of an earlier composition. What we are clear about is that there is urgent need for such a simple statement and that our responsible Christian leaders ought to produce it as soon as possible.

'PROPHETIC ORTHODOXY' *versus* 'REPETITIVE ORTHODOXY.'

For some time past the traditionalist opponents of Modernism have excused themselves from the difficulties and dangers of answering its arguments by declaring that Modernism is dead. We have not observed, however, that in obedience to the classical axiom, they refrain from speaking ill of it.

The statement that Modernism is dead is undoubtedly due, in some cases, to the wish being the father of the thought, but in other cases it is undoubtedly due to a misconception of the real character of Modernism. They wrongly regard Modernism as consisting of a body of dogmatic conclusions mostly of a negative and destructive character. This is not Modernism. Modernism is a truth-seeking, forward-glancing spirit which seeks to adjust our traditional orthodoxy to our enlarging knowledge of the truth. This is clearly set forth in a letter from the Rev. A. H. Streeten, Vicar of St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich, published in the *Guardian* of March 15:

> 'Modernism, in the true sense of the word, is the spirit of life and progress, and, just as the evolution of physical life has only been possible through continual adjustment to a changing environment, so it must be with the life of religion. If it had not been for the Modernism of St. Stephen and St. Paul, Christianity would have remained, and probably died, as a Jewish sect. It was the Modernism of the Fourth Gospel in its claim that Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, was the Incarnate *Logos,* that gave Christianity a foothold in the philosophy of the day.
>
> St. Thomas Aquinas was the Modernist of the Middle Ages, in fitting the Christian faith into the setting of Aristotelian science, the mode of the day; and if the Modernism of Erasmus, in his effort, with men like Colet and More, to baptize the new learning into the old Catholic religion, had not failed, the necessary transition from the old to the new might have been accomplished without the upheaval of the Reformation. Modernism is not a peculiar feature in the religion of to-day; it has played its part in every necessary transition from the old to the new. But it is in the last 100 years that the transition has been most rapid, and the Modernism which guided the Church through the "perils" of Darwinism and the Higher Criticism is still very much alive and as vital as ever to the life and growth of the Church to-day.'

In the *Christian World* of March 7, Mr. H. Bulcock, a well-known Congregationalist minister, agrees with Mr. Streeten that in the Church of England at least, Modernism is very much alive. He writes:

> 'Modernism seems at present more conspicuous in the (Anglican) Modern Churchmen's Union than in Congregationalism, the glory of

which used to be the safeguarding of individual religious conviction, the "liberty of prophesying" and the service of progressive and prophetic religion.'

The Rev. J. V. Langmead Casserley, Rector of Little Easton, Dunmow, the leader of a Neo-Thomist Anglican Group, whose animadversions on Modernism had led to Mr. Streeten's protest, replied in the *Guardian* of March 21, as follows:

'I endeavoured to suggest that Modernism should be understood and appreciated as a stage in the movement of Christian thought from a merely repetitive orthodoxy to a prophetic orthodoxy—that is, to an orthodoxy vividly aware of its immediate context, comprehending the needs and problems of its environment with that unique degree of insight which is one of the distinctive characteristics and glories of orthodoxy.'

As fellow-Modernists, we thank Mr. Casserley for a new definition of Modernism as 'prophetic orthodoxy.' This new definition of Modernism as prophetic orthodoxy stresses what we have always sought to maintain, that static orthodoxy is in much greater danger of becoming heretical than is progressive orthodoxy, and the same is true of static Modernism.

Not only should the orthodoxy of one age be replaced in due course by the orthodoxy of the next age, but in the modernist effort to secure a 'continual adjustment' to the demands and needs of 'a changing environment' some modernist efforts must needs be more fruitful and adequate than others. This constitutes no condemnation of Modernism. If true to the modernist spirit, Modernism must be experimental. And loyal to the spirit of truth, it must be ready, in the light of newer knowledge, to modify or sacrifice working hypotheses which it has found to be inadequate. Professor Huxley said that he witnessed daily the tragedy of science when a beautiful hypothesis was slain by an ugly fact. No Modernist should worship a corpse, however beautiful, nor feel any spirit of resentment against the ugly fact or the discoverer of the ugly fact which slays his beautiful hypothesis.

We not only need in the Christian Church obedience to the Royal Law, as St. James calls it, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' but also loyalty to the spirit of the Royal Society in which love of truth unites rival seekers after her.

IN MEMORIAM: DOUGLAS WHITE

THE Modernist cause and many other good causes have suffered grievous loss by the sudden death of Dr. Douglas White from a heart attack at his home in Harrow-on-the Hill on Easter Monday, at the age of 68. On Easter Day he attended Harrow Parish Church, of which he was a sidesman, and in the evening had listened to a fine sermon delivered by Canon Anson in the Temple Church on 'Life after Death.'

John Douglas Campbell White came of a well-known Glasgow family and succeeded his uncle, the late Lord Overtoun, in the ownership of Overtoun. Only last year he presented the mansion-house, with some 90 acres of land, to the town of Dumbarton for a hospital and public gardens. Although of Scottish birth and ancestry, he was educated in England, first at Charterhouse, where he was head boy, and later at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was a classical scholar.

He took a First in the Classical Tripos and a First in the Theological Tripos and various prizes. He was ordained Deacon in 1898 and became curate of St. Peter's, Eaton Square. Theological difficulties led to his resignation, and he entered on his preparation for the medical profession. He obtained his M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P. in 1904, and his M.D. in 1905, and became House Physician at the London Hospital and later at the Lister Institute he did valuable research work.

White was deeply interested in social hygiene and sex problems. In the Great War he became a Captain in the R.A.M.C. and did valuable work in lecturing to tens of thousands of British soldiers on sex difficulties and dangers.

During the last thirty-three years, as a resident of Harrow, Douglas White served his community in many ways. As a Councillor he was Chairman of the Public Health Committee. He was also Chairman of the local branch of the Waifs and Strays Society, and the Harrow and Wealdstone Hospital claimed his active support.

Another of his interests was aviation. In 1914 he and a friend built the first flying-boat in this country. This was delivered to

the Admiralty in August, 1914, and was used for guarding the coast at Felixstowe.

Deeper than all his interests as medical practitioner, social worker, land-holder and engineer, was his interest in the Christian Religion. He was a profound believer in the truth of the Christian Religion and in its supreme value for personal and social life. But to his sound theological scholarship and shrewd intelligence, traditional Christian teaching combined with the retention and use of its traditional dogmatic formularies by the Church of to-day, created profound and well-nigh insuperable difficulties. It was this conflict of loyalties which caused him to resign his ministry in the Church of England and led him, nearly a quarter of a century ago, to become a devoted and strenuous member of the Modern Churchmen's Union. He was Chairman of the Council from 1924 to 1930 and a Vice-President at the time of his death. He attended the annual Modern Churchmen's Conferences regularly from 1917 to 1939. The *Modern Churchman* is indebted to him for a number of valuable articles and reviews. He recognized the urgent need for such a society as the Modern Churchmen's Union, and was convinced that the growing realization of its aims was essential, if not only the Church of England was to retain its influence in the modern world, but also if the nation itself was to be saved from lapsing into Paganism. The dogmatic issue which the Church authorities were unwilling to face seemed to him a crucial factor in the modern religious situation.

He held that no solution of the present religious crisis was possible which avoided making courageous concessions in the dogmatic sphere to the results of modern scientific research and historical criticism. Subscription to the traditional Christian Creeds, and above all their use in the public worship of the Church of England, was, he felt, a source of weakness to the Church. It excluded many men of first class intelligence and high Christian purpose from entering the ministry. The use of the ancient creeds in the Church services, instead of inspiring modern men to faith in the Christian religion did little more than direct their attention to its difficulties. Moved by this conviction he composed the following creed, hoping against hope that it might one day become one of the alternative creeds which

he desired to see the Church authorize for use in public worship :

> 'I believe in God, the Father of all ;
> And in Jesus Christ,
> Revealer of God, and Saviour of men ;
> And in the Spirit of Holiness
> Which is the Spirit of God and Jesus,
> By which Spirit man is made divine.
> I acknowledge the communion of all faithful people
> In beauty, goodness and truth ;
> And I believe in the forgiveness of sins,
> The glory of righteousness,
> The victory of Love,
> And the Life Eternal.'

In 1913 the Cambridge University Press published a little volume from his pen entitled *Forgiveness and Suffering*, a study of Christian belief. This is a modern treatment of the doctrine of the Atonement—searching and moving—and will suggest to the sympathetic reader the loss which the Church of England sustained when Douglas White withdrew from its ministry.

His later writings, not voluminous, but practical and educational, were mainly concerned with sex problems in relation to social and religious life. *Right Marriage*, of which he was co-author with Canon Barry of Westminster, secured a deservedly wide attention. The British Social Hygiene Council published his *Open Letter to Young Men.* The Modern Churchmen's Union published *What do you think of Sex?* a word to boys of school age. We know of nothing better in their way than these three booklets. His essay, 'Religion and Sex,' contributed to *The Church and the Twentieth Century* (edited by G. L. H. Harvey and published by Macmillans) is addressed to a more educated public—as was his volume *Modern Light on Sex and Marriage* (1934).

He took much interest in the work of Ripon Hall, of which he was a Governor for many years. A few months before his death he had become its Treasurer.

It is difficult to do justice to the attraction and indefinable charm of Douglas White's personality. To his many gifts he added the grace of extreme modesty.

H.D.A.M.

RELIGIOUS REACTION IN AUSTRALIA

By the Rev. G. Stuart Watts,
Editor of *The Church Standard* (Australia), 1933-40.

MR. H. G. Wells, in one of his recent works, complains of the suppression of everything which is fearless and outspoken, especially in Australia, and declares that our refusal to recognize the vast changes now taking place in human life is foolish and stupid.

His strictures on Australian obscurantism are, alas, fully justified. For years a singularly inept censorship operated, and some of the world's best literature fell beneath the ban. A slight improvement has been effected recently. The Press, for the greater part, is partisan and hostile to new ideas. In every department of life party spirit runs high, and the tendency to identify principles with personalities is very strong. In politics and religion the desire to find out the truth for its own sake is all too rare: the interests of the party or sect are paramount and furnish the criterion whereby 'truth' is distinguished from 'falsehood.' Educational method is so antiquated that it positively creaks. All universities are on a secular foundation, though recently in Brisbane, thanks to the good offices of the Archbishop, Dr. Wand, theological subjects have been included in the Arts curriculum, whilst in Sydney a Faculty of Divinity has been established, enabling graduates in other faculties to proceed to Divinity degrees. Unfortunately, the long-established secularism of the universities, and the failure of the Church, in most instances, to provide university chaplains, have produced widespread indifference and a certain amount of active hostility to religion in student circles. In Sydney University the only Church which cares adequately for its student life is the Roman Catholic. Our own Church has never set up a university pastorate, and that fine scholar, the Rev. Canon A. H. Garnsey, Warden of St. Paul's College within the University, is faced

with the impossible task of shepherding, not only St. Paul's men, but the far larger Anglican student population of the other colleges.

Amongst the theological colleges, pride of place must be accorded to the Joint Theological Faculty within Sydney University, 'the finest theological faculty in Australia,' as the late Professor Andrew Harper, a former Dean, used to term it. It represents the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches, and numbers among its professors some world-famous scholars, notably the Rev. Dr. S. Angus, who is of cardinal significance for this survey. Dr. Angus is a brilliant New Testament critic and a leading authority on the Mystery Religions and Christianity. Unfortunately, over a long period this eminent scholar has been tortured by recurrent heresy trials, conducted by his Presbyterian co-religionists, which have exacted a heavy toll on his time and strength. The present writer, who was one of the pioneer students of the Joint Faculty, though in after years returning to the Anglican Church, well remembers an incident which marked a decisive step in Dr. Angus's career. The bloodhounds of orthodoxy had been in full cry, and, after a particularly trying experience, the doctor was about to leave for the United States to fulfil a series of lecturing engagements. The students assembled and assured their teacher of undying affection and gratitude. Speaking with deep emotion, Dr. Angus told us that he had come to the conclusion that his work in Australia was ended, and that he would accept a position in the States which had long been open to him; but the students' expression of confidence and affection had made him revise his decision: he would return and continue his work in Sydney.

We were overjoyed; but we little knew what it would mean for this noble servant of truth. Fresh heresy trials were instituted, during the worst of which his wife died, his own health broke down, and many valuable activities, including a series of lectures to university students in answer to a previous series by an atheistic professor, were brought to an untimely end. A prolonged illness followed; and then the storm burst out afresh over the publication of a book which is marked by a radiant faith in Jesus and a deep understanding of human needs—*Essential Christianity*. Weak and suffering, Dr. Angus had

to travel to Melbourne to face the supreme tribunal of his Church; but he was denied the satisfaction of a definite decision, one way or the other: the question would be reopened in two years' time. On returning to Sidney, a long series of visits to nerve specialists began, and, proving quite useless, the last desperate resort, an operation, was tried. Meanwhile, all Dr. Angus' scholarly activities are suspended, and it is probable that a long time will elapse before they can be resumed. It is amazing to learn that preparations for the reopening of the trial are being made, despite the critical state of the Doctor's health. The case has aroused widespread indignation amongst thoughtful people within and outside the Church, and has brought organized religion into deep discredit amongst the ever-growing band of non-churchgoing intellectuals. The persecution—the word is not too strong—of this saintly scholar, this devoted and lovable Christian, is one of the most serious blemishes on Australian religious life and theological thought.

The last few months have witnessed an outburst of obscurantist fervour in the Anglican Church. The Archbishop of Brisbane[1] and the writer of this paper have been branded as 'infidel Christians' by a reactionary dignitary in Sydney because they espoused the modern critical attitude to the Old Testament. The Bishop Coadjutor of Sydney, Dr. Pilcher,[2] stirred up a hornets' nest by stating in a public address and a newspaper article a few elementary facts of Biblical criticism. Sydney 'Low Church' pulpits have resounded with fervent professions of faith in what Ronald Knox called 'the edibility of Jonah and the credibility of *Judges*.' Belief in verbal inspiration and the infallibility of the Scriptures has been set forth in the strongest terms and Modernism of all kinds denounced as the offspring of Satan—an effort in which Protestant Fundamentalists have received support from their fellow-reactionaries in the Roman Communion.

Not to be outdone by their Protestant brethren, however, Anglo-Catholic Traditionalists have been assailing Modernism and claiming for pious opinions the dignity and authority of

[1] J. W. C. Wand, D.D., formerly Fellow and Dean of Oriel College, Oxford.

[2] A distinguished graduate of Hertford College, Oxford.

articles of the Faith. The present writer, when editor of *The Church Standard*, a position from which he was dismissed recently for 'heresy,' consistently defended Dr. Angus and advocated liberal thought and social reform. The standpoint of the journal was Liberal Catholic, though Churchmen of all schools of thought enjoyed the hospitality of its columns. The climax was reached when a correspondent asked what was the verdict of modern scholarship regarding the 'brethren' of Jesus, and was informed that most scholars considered them to be the children of Joseph and Mary. A leading Anglo-Catholic priest immediately accused him of putting out 'teaching which, if not definitely heretical, is at least dishonouring to the Blessed Mother and the Catholic Church.' Another leader of the same party solemnly asserted that, if the perpetual virginity of Mary were discredited, he would become a stark atheist! The same good man declared that he would renounce Christianity if it could be proved that married life was superior to virginity. On the other hand, Liberal Catholics and Liberal Evangelicals warmly supported the attitude of *The Church Standard*, but the forces of reaction were too strong; the policy of Catholic Modernism was repudiated by the board of directors and a change in editorship effected. The outlook of the Church Press is indeed discouraging. One of the two papers, a fortnightly, is Protestant fundamentalist; the other, a weekly, is now a conservative Catholic organ. The gravity of the situation is intensified by the growing intolerance of fresh ideas both in Church and State, and the recrudescence of all kinds of superstition—astrology, numerology, etc., are flourishing and are fawned upon by Press and radio alike—sure evidence of their popularity and commercial value.

In the midst of the gathering gloom, the devotion to truth by Dr. Angus, Bishop Burgmann of Goulburn and others is a steady flame which, we hope, will shine more and more unto the perfect day.

PHILO AND HIS SIGNIFICANCE FOR CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

By the Rev. W. Richardson, M.A., Tutor at Ripon Hall.

ALEXANDER the Macedonian could never have dreamt how important for the world of thought and culture his meteoric career was to be. For a brief moment Greeks, Phoenicians, Jews, Egyptians, Persians and Indians were fellow-subjects under one king. East was introduced to West. Western cities were planted far out to the East, and Eastern customs, thought and manners took root in the West. There was a mixture of peoples and cultures as never before, and perhaps rarely since.

One of Alexander's cities, and the greatest, was Alexandria in Egypt, and Alexandria became both the centre of the new world and, as it were, the type of the new culture. In huge Alexandria all nations of East and West mingled in trade and commerce, thought and religion. Under the Ptolemies, themselves heirs of both East and West, art, science and learning of all sorts were fostered and the fusion of Eastern and Western culture begun by Alexander ripened into fruit.

Philo must surely have been the most typical representative of that fusion. He was one of the large Jewish community at Alexandria and a very respected member of it. He was probably born about 20 B.C. and died some time shortly after 50 A.D. According to Eusebius he belonged to one of the noblest families of Alexandria,[1] and his brother was an officer of the Imperial Government[2] and a foremost man among the Jews.[3] Philo himself was sent on a painful embassy to the Emperor Gaius about 39 or 40 A.D. to secure rights for the Jews. He was thus a contemporary of Jesus Christ. He is wholly uninfluenced by Christianity, which was apparently unknown to him.

In the development of thought Philo stands at a very important point. He had some literary and intellectual ancestry, though we only know fragments of it. Philo was a Jew and a

[1] Eus. H.E., ii, 4. [2] Jos. Ant., xviii, 8 1. [3] *ibid.*, xx, 5, 2.

firm believer in the Jewish faith, but he was also Greek-speaking and his thought was moulded by the typical Platonic eclecticism of Alexandria and by the Eastern mysticism, the native religions and the mystery cults which had all blended in hospitable Alexandria. In Alexandria sharp edges became softer, and men sought the broad outlines or the common bases of all truth and experience. In that *milieu* the *Wisdom of Solomon* and the *Septuagint* took shape, works clearly foreshadowing the fusion of Greek eclectic philosophy, whose main basis was Platonism, with Biblical Judaism.

The *Septuagint* set out to make known and popularize the Old Testament to Greek-speaking Jews or Gentiles, even modifying the text in the interests of Platonism.[4] Philo set out to explain Jewish religion and doctrines in terms of Greek thought and so to popularize his faith with the intelligentsia of his day by showing that it was as good as, and indeed contained and ante-dated, all the best of Greek, or any other, thought and religion, just as the Christian apologists later claimed to find Christianity in Greek thought. In this and the fact that he came from an obviously fertile *milieu—Wisdom, Septuagint, Clement, Origen* and *Plotinus* also blossomed there—lies his importance for Christian origins. He is a sign of the times.

A general characteristic of Alexandrine thought was that it was metaphysical and speculative rather than empirical or interested in history, facts or events. It was interested in the universal and the type rather than in the particular and the individual, and in the Platonic tradition it believed that true knowledge and certainty lay with the universal or pure transcendent being. Naturally, therefore, it begins with God and tends to try to see Him in His essence as far as possible removed from human imperfection.

In this connexion three tendencies are to be noted. First of all there is the Jewish tendency to regard God as transcendentally holy, a Being of whom no image can be adequate and whose holiness sets Him apart from men in moral isolation. Secondly, there is the Platonic tenet that the Supreme Being or Idea of the Good must be beyond all contact with change and decay,

[4] Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*; Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek.*

and an object of pure knowledge which placed Him in a sort of intellectual isolation. Thirdly comes the Egyptian-Hellenistic reaction against the many gods of Egypt's native religion and against the apotheosis of Hellenistic kings like the Ptolemies. Care was therefore taken to avoid anthropomorphic statements like God is angry, or repents,[5] or walks in a garden, and when they occur they are interpreted allegorically with a spiritual or intellectual meaning by Philo and Origen.

For Philo, Moses was a great authority along with Plato; indeed Moses was the chief hierophant of God. God must therefore be in some sense near to man as well as transcendent, yet none the less even Philo finds God best described in negations which cut Him off and separate Him from human experience. So He is changeless, self-sufficient, incapable of suffering (ἀπαθής), as unlike as possible to the drifting, wondering, weary, suffering men of the disturbed Hellenistic Age. God is also without qualities (ἄποιος), pure being beyond the manifold forms of worldly existence, because if we knew what or how He is, and not merely that He is, He would of necessity be brought into relation with human qualities and characteristics, which would impair His perfection. So He must be self-contained and beyond all relation, and we cannot use of Him such expressions as 'my God,' or 'thy God,' except subjectively from our side referring to our own experience of God.

So would speak Philo the philosopher and Platonist, seeking the source and ground of all things in a perfect, transcendent principle from which all change and contradiction are absent and from which all other things somehow receive their being and character. The problem, then, was how was this God related to the universe and how could He be? And how can we know anything about Him? Plato had adumbrated his conception of it in his *Theory of Ideas*; the Alexandrines — Philo, Clement, Origen, Plotinus, etc. — followed, and Philo's unique interest lies in the fact that he brought to the task the firm faith of the Jew in a God who, as Dr. Tollinton remarks,[6] was 'a living God' who communed with men and was no unknown God.

[5] In *Gen.* vi, 6 the LXX removes the phrase.

[6] *Alexandrine Teaching on the Universe*, by R. B. Tollinton, D.D., D.Litt.; Allen & Unwin.

Why then did this transcendent God of the Alexandrines create the universe? Dr. Tollinton gives three reasons: (*a*) because He is good and wished to share His joy (this is the line of Plato's *Timaeus* and Philo); (*b*) because He is active and could not be inactive (that would probably be death to God, as Philo was inclined to feel); (*c*) because He is Father (this is both Jewish and Hellenistic; the Cosmos is God's Son in Hellenistic speculation and in the Trinity of Plotinus, where *Nous*, or Spirit, is the offspring of the One).

The three conceptions imply will and purpose, but Plotinus also has the idea of emanation. The One 'overflows' into the Trinity, as a spring which ever flows without diminution, and naturally, spontaneously without willing.[7] In any case, God is now a cause and not merely transcendent, and so He is related. The Absolute is linked with particular things. The problem now is why, if God is perfect, is the universe imperfect? — the problem of evil. Ontological speculations about God are in collision with inescapable experience of facts.

The Alexandrines tried to save the transcendence of God by theories of mediation. God created and acted through ministers. Unfortunately, as Dr. Tollinton says, 'Qui facit per alium facit per se' is equally true in theology as in law, and subordinate ministers cannot bear the entire responsibility for the imperfections of the universe, no matter how few or many be the ranks of their hierarchy. Such theories merely covered up the problem of dualism, but they did the invaluable service of bridging the gulf between the transcendent God and His world. They brought the God of the philosophers back into the world of ordinary men. The world took on meaning and became alive, not mechanistic or pointless. Angels and spirits were everywhere from the stars downward — 'turn but a stone and move a wing' — and philosophy was fused with a new element, the angelology and demonology of Persia and the East. Instead of rigid dualism we get, after all, close continuity in the scale of being.

Philo expressed his conception of this mediation in terms of his doctrine of Powers. These Powers are supra-mundane entities—one cannot say 'beings' because they are not certainly

[7] W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus.*

or necessarily personal in any sense—sharing somehow the divine nature and acting as God's subordinate ministers, showing forth His nature and carrying out His purposes. So when God at creation said 'Let us make man,' He was speaking to the Powers.[8] So the Powers share in the creation and preservation of the universe, maintaining all things therein in their order, place and function. They are immaterial but can act on matter, to which they impart quality and determination. They are, at least sometimes apparently, above the angels in the scale of being, though at others identified with them. They appear as cosmic forces, though through them God's personal will and mind also find expression.

Above and at the head of all the Powers, next to God, stands the Logos, the Reason of God, Σοφια, the Wisdom of God as in *Proverbs* viii, *Ecclus.* xxiv, and *Wisdom of Solomon* vii-ix. Again Philo is not clear. We cannot be sure whether he regarded the Logos as a definitely personal being or agent, or as God's impersonal immanent reason. He speaks of the Logos in both ways. Neither can we be sure whether the Logos is one of the Powers, even if over them, or whether it is an entity quite different in kind. In fact, it is possible for the Powers (δυναμεις) to be called λόγοι.

Philo's eclecticism carries him still further. He identifies the Powers with Plato's Ideas and no doubt conceived of them in a similar descending hierarchy, all ultimately springing from the Logos or Σοφία as the Ideas did from the Idea of Good, or as Pallas Athene did from the head of Zeus. In his adumbrations of the scheme Philo makes use of parts of the Old Testament in allegory, thus finding the Powers already in the sacred text. The six Cities of Refuge in one case represent the six highest powers—three beyond Jordan representing cosmic powers and three on this side, those powers concerned with man. He also allegorizes the description of the Jewish sanctuary and Ark of the Covenant for the same purpose, finding the Logos and Powers symbolized in things like the Mercy-seat and Cherubim from the text 'I will speak to them from above the mercy-seat between the cherubim.'[9] The Voice is the Logos and above is the One who speaks. Then come the Creative, Ruling and

[8] Philo, *De Op. Mundi*, 24.

[9] Philo, Q.E. II, 68.

Legislative Powers, etc., and finally the Κόσμος Νοητός, the Conceptional World or archetype of Creation. Thus under this allegory and symbolism Philo gives us a complete scheme of mediation whereby the supreme transcendent God is linked with His created world in the closest bonds and also maintains morality and justice by exercising legislative and punitive power without becoming Himself contaminated, losing His impassibility (ἀπαθεία), or becoming less than perfectly good and beneficent. In the same way if God's glory appears to Moses on Sinai, it is not God but a mediating power. God is not localised.

Once or twice Philo even adumbrates a trinity. He allegorizes the story of Abraham entertaining three angels so that the centre one is God the Father and those beside him are his Creative and Royal Powers. So we have a trinity in unity, but Philo makes plain that he regards the unity as the more significant by suggesting that they only appear as three to mortal vision.'[10]

How far does Philo really bridge the gap between God and the world? He was in a dilemma. Real mediation demanded independent, personal beings, but self-existent personal beings would endanger Jewish monotheism. If the Powers were not self-existent personal beings, they must be modes of God's action personified, and God's transcendence was in danger. The Christian problem of the Incarnation and Trinity was already foreshadowed in Philo's problem of the Creation.

In the case of Philo it was especially easy both to have his cake and to eat it in this matter for two reasons. In the first place, the understanding of personality at the time was very rudimentary. Christian doctrinal disputes touching the Incarnation later led to its clarification. Secondly, Philo's method of allegory naturally tended to confuse personality and personification, so that a personified abstraction receives 'a local habitation and a name' in the heavenly places. For example, the three angels mentioned above as standing for three abstractions would naturally tend to cause the abstractions to be regarded as personal beings.[11]

[10] Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-9. Philo, Q.G. IV, 2; De Abr., 107, 112 *ff.*

[11] For Philo's method of exegesis see Hatch's Hibbert Lectures, 1888, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usage on the Christian Church.*

To what extent Philo's Powers or Logos are ever really self-existent beings we can only infer from his use of them. Dr. Tollinton cites two good examples :[12]

> (1) God Himself made the higher element in man, but the lower elements involving error and sin were due to subordinate powers. It did not befit God to create wickedness in man by His own agency.
>
> (2) God Himself does not punish. Thus though three visitors appear to Abraham at Mamre, and one is the supreme God, yet only two appear at Sodom to announce its destruction. God is absent.

Dr. Tollinton here notes an anticipation of Marcion's difficulty and of his solution of it in the theory of an inferior Demiurge.

Clearly from such passages as these God abides in perfect and uncontaminated moral isolation, in perfect goodness, while the Powers must bear their own responsibility. The Creation and Government of the Universe are by acts of will and not by the natural evolution of deity as in the Plotinian Trinity, wherein Soul by the law of its being engenders its own likeness and begets the universe as a copy of intellectual divinities and so becomes the immanent World-Soul, as in the 'Timaeus.' Origen follows Philo.

It is impossible to discuss at length Philo's views about the created world, but some points are of interest. We have noted how the Alexandrines believed in personal spirits or powers occupying parts of the created world, such as the stars, and we are reminded of St. Paul's authorities, principalities, powers and spiritual wickedness in high places, which no doubt had astral references,[13] as well as connexion with the legend of the Fallen Watchers in the *Book of Enoch.* Furthermore, Philo believed the whole universe was an ordered unity in which all the parts were united in communion and sympathy. Heavens and earth were closely related in organic harmony wherein everything had its place and function, and even apparently imperfect things would be perfect seen in relation to the whole. This unity and harmony were of course maintained by the Logos and the Powers, and the Stoics also believed that their immanent logos produced order and sympathy (*συμπαθεία*) throughout the universe; but Philo's Alexandrine Platonism led him to differ from them. His Logos and Powers were at least half-personal, half-transcendent, self-subsistent beings, and under

[12] *op cit.*, p. 60.

[13] *Cf.* W. L. Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles.*

God, as His ministers, they created a world which was good after the divine pattern of the world as it exists in the Divine Mind (Κοσμος Νοητός). Again Philo is in the full Jewish-Alexandrine tradition, for traces of this are to be found interpolated in the LXX where it reads, for instance, in *Genesis* i, 2, ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦν ἀορατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος for 'And the earth was *waste* and *void*,' and possibly in *Deuteronomy* xxxii, 8, 'He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of *the angels of God*' for 'the children of Israel.' In both these cases there is probably a reference to an ideal world as the counterpart of the visible world.[14] The Stoics believed in cycles of identical worlds periodically returning to primitive fire, but Philo's universe, being modelled on the divine pattern through the Logos-Σοφία, was alone in its goodness and beauty, indissoluble and continuing to eternity once created.

We may compare St. Paul's statements about Christ the Son scattered about his Epistles, but especially in *Colossians*. In Him all things consist, are united and harmonized. He is central for the understanding of the universe; supreme in it; and directs it to the conclusion to which all creation moves. But apparently, unlike Philo's world, St. Paul's has an appointed end probably soon to come, a consummation when all things enriched will return once and for all to their original pre-mundane happy state and the universe will be transformed. This seems a *via media* between Philo and the Stoics.

With regard to man's place in the world, it is true, as Dr. Tollinton says, that their Platonism led the Alexandrines to concentrate on the ideal cosmos of which this is but an imperfect copy, and hence man is always regarded as a fallen creature, and also that when there were in the universe authorities, principalities and powers, personal beings who influenced the destiny of man, he could not be regarded as quite so important as to-day. But it is worth remembering also that man was made in the image of the Logos itself, which surely made him king of all created things and makes the Logos the representative of all mankind in the heavenly places.

What was the origin of man in detail? If his body was material like any other matter, what was his soul and how did it

[14] *Cf.* also *Isa.* xlv, 18, καταδείξας.

arise? Philo is not altogether clear. Occasionally he follows the Platonic view that the soul was pre-existent and passed through a series of lives in different bodies, thus bringing to each body its own mental history. If so, it was either ethereal or wholly incorporeal and descended into the body from above. Compare *Wisdom* xiii, 19, 'Now I was a child of parts and a good soul fell to my lot. Nay, rather, being good I came into a body undefiled.' More generally he takes the *Genesis* account that God breathed into man the breath of life, and that thus a new soul was created for each body. Philo was thus a Creationist like Clement. In these two strains we see most clearly the tension between both Philo's and Christianity's two traditions, Platonist and Jewish.

Like Plotinus and the Hebrew prophets, Philo seems to have experienced religious-mystical rapture akin to intoxication. He describes it in terms of Bacchic frenzy and enthusiasm, not thereby necessarily implying that he was a devotee or initiate in any mysteries, but merely saying he had a spiritual experience of God equal in vividness to the less purely spiritual frenzy of the mystery cults. The human soul, made in the image of the Logos and akin to it, soars aloft to union and communion with its maker,[15] and Philo claims that in such ecstasies intellectual verities of the greatest significance were revealed to him.[16] Here again Philo was in the Platonist-Alexandrine tradition as well as in the Jewish, though such revelation was in the air of the day.[17] We are reminded especially of the spiritual drunkenness of Pentecost in *Acts* ii, of the charismatic gifts mentioned in *I Cor.* xii, of St. Paul's ecstasies and those of the Montanists.

Though Philo, like St. Paul, believed in a mystical fusion with the divine, in which a man transcended the barriers of his self-hood, he also like St. Paul believed that he still maintained his own personality and freewill. It was no impersonal blending of soul-stuff in the cosmic-soul or of mere forceful 'possession.' Made in the image of God, man had received the capacity for voluntary movement and freedom of action as far possible like God. He is between God and the animals. Philo, just as he

[15] Philo, *De Op. Mundi*, 23. [16] Philo, *De Cher.*, 9; *De Migr. Abr.*, 7.

[17] *cf.* Plut. *De Pythiae Orac.*, 21, 22; *De Defen. Ora.*, 48; and Plotinus, W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*

followed *Deuteronomy* xxx, 15, 'See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil,' and Plato, who described human responsibility in the terse phrase 'responsibility lies with the chooser' (*αἰτία ἑλομένου*), also foreshadows the view of freedom in the Christian Alexandrines and Plotinus, for whom its value was that in it lay the means of gradual unbroken growth into the likeness of God (*ὁμοιώσις τῷ θεῷ*) and to the happier state which is our destiny. So Clement's true Gnostic, by the true training and true knowledge, ascends the mystic way to divination and perfect communion.

And so ultimately we come to the final destiny of the soul. The *Wisdom of Solomon* had already said 'The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God . . . Their hope is full of immortality' (iii, 1-4), and Philo, like Plato, held the soul to be of its nature immortal. Eternal death was no doubt the punishment awaiting the wicked, but this was loss of hope, the unforgiveable sin, which destroys the image of the Logos in man. Similarly, the Neoplatonic soul descends from body to body, ever weakening until it loses all power to rise, and so forgets its true destiny, but still it never dies in the sense of passing into a state of not-being. Philo and *Wisdom* knew of no resurrection of the body, and Plotinus' successive incarnations of soul are in different bodies. Origen, with the new tradition of Christ's resurrection behind him, maintains the necessity of a body for all beings except the Trinity and maintains the resurrection. The body in general he believed was in constant flux and change, much as we conceive of permanence through change in growing organisms. The same material atoms may have belonged to several successive bodies, and if there is to be a reassembling at the resurrection how is it to be? Bodies after resurrection are not flesh, but of a refined substance as were the bodies of Moses and Elias at the Transfiguration. They were an ethereal radiance, which reminds one of Philo's and St. Paul's light symbolism when they are talking of God and ecstatic communion with Him. Perhaps in essence there is not a great deal of difference between Philo's immortality and of Origen's or St. Paul's resurrection life.

Much more, of course, could be said to show the affinities of Philo and his *milieu* with early Christian thought and the com-

mon concepts which shaped both, but perhaps we may now conclude with a glance at Dr. Tollinton's most interesting comparison of Alexandrine with modern thought and science. He points out that for them man was spiritually at home in the world in the scale of being, and they thought of him in terms of descent from God, not of ascent from primitive man as we do. To-day the physical world looms larger and man seems often to have to fight it. Everything in the world was created for man, according to Philo, as the bright stage set for his entry. Again, to-day spiritual values tend to be centred in man alone, not in all the grades of being of which the pattern and guarantee was the Κόσμος Νοητός.

To the Alexandrines cosmology was a drama with a purpose. The creation, descent and return of the soul were all planned and guided by Universal Reason, by kinship and sympathy with which human reason could attain to the understanding of life. To-day we have not yet universally attained to such a synoptic view in our new physical world. But we can discern signs that such a view is at last dawning upon us in the light of modern cosmic teleology and of the realization of the fact that man is organic to Nature, morally and spiritually as well as physically.*

* Since the above was written Dr. Robert Eisler has very kindly called my attention to an interesting passage in Philo which is not without significance for primitive Christian theology. It is to be found in *De Execrationibus*, 8-9. This describes the sudden return of the exiles of the Dispersion from all the quarters of the globe, 'being guided by some vision more divine than in accordance with human nature (*ξεναγούμενοι πρός τινος θειοτέρας ἢ κατὰ φύσιν ἀνθρωπίνην ὄψεως*), invisible indeed to others but manifest to those alone who were being saved, who made use of three intercessors for reconciliation with the Father (*τρισὶ χρησάμενοι παρακλήτοις τῶν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καταλλαγῶν*)."

The three 'paracletes' are (1) the mercy and goodness of God who is invoked (*ἑνὶ μὲν ἐπιεικείᾳ καὶ χρηστότητι τοῦ παρακαλουμένου*); (2) the holiness of the patriarchs (*τῶν ἀρχηγετῶν τοῦ ἔθνους ὁσιοτήτι*) whose disembodied souls effectually intercede with God for their posterity; and (3) the improvement of people brought into treaty-relationships (*βελτίωσις τῶν ἀγομένων εἰς σπονδὰς καὶ συμβάσεις*) so as to serve and please God as children do a father —which improvement especially wins the goodwill (*εὐμενεία*) of the above-mentioned patriarchs.

The mere mention of 'paracletes' in itself is interesting in view of the *Fourth Gospel* and *I John*. Their functions are particularly interesting when we compare them with *Romans* viii, 12-30, with its references to the intercessions of the Spirit, to the earnest expectation of creation waiting for the revelation of the sons of God, and to 'the redemption of the body.'

CHRISTIANITY AS INTERPRETED BY A SPIRITUALIST

By The Editor.

MR. Arthur Findlay in *The Psychic Stream*,[1] a volume of twelve hundred pages, undertakes to explain the origin and growth of Christianity from the point of view of the spiritualist. Mr. Findlay is a well-known writer on Spiritualism: he is a convinced believer in the reality of psychic phenomena: he may be regarded as a specialist in this sphere. In dealing with the origin of Christianity he rightly goes back into the religious history of the many ages of mankind which preceded the rise of the Christian religion. This he does unfettered by the limitations of traditionalist Christian historians who for their pre-Christian religious history restrict themselves to the pages of the *Old Testament* and the *Apocrypha*. Mr. Findlay, true to the modern spirit and method, sits at the feet of our anthropologists and students of Comparative Religion. For pre-Christian religious history the *Golden Bough* is as significant for him as is the *Old Testament*.

Whilst a very lucid writer with a great gift for popularization and generalization, it will be evident at once to the trained student in Anthropology, Comparative Religion, New Testament Criticism and Church History that Mr. Findlay is an amateur. There are many signs of this, the most conspicuous being the entire absence of documentation for his more daring statements, *e.g.* that it was generally believed by primitive man that the gods devoured the spirits of the dead. Had he known more he would have dared less: had he laboriously and conscientiously studied at first hand the great masters of research he would have been less crystal clear in his conclusions. The poets who wrote

> 'A little learning is a dangerous thing;
> Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring,'

and

> 'They see not clearliest who see all things clear,'

[1] *The Psychic Stream*, by Arthur Findlay. (Psychic Press Ltd. 12*s*. 6*d*. 1939.)

realized, in a way in which we fear many of Mr. Findlay's readers will not realize, that half-truths, facile generalizations, and pelucid solutions of profound and intricate problems, although providing fascinating reading are the enemies rather than the friends of truth. It was Renan who wrote that truth is found in *les nuances*.

Yet we should be unjust to Mr. Findlay if we gave the impression that he is not a lover of truth and does not desire to teach it fearlessly. We are convinced that, in intention at least, he is loyal to the citation from Voltaire placed on his title-page :

> 'The discovery of what is true and the practice of what is good are the two most important objects in life.'

But the field of knowledge which Mr. Findlay has been compelled to traverse is so vast, and his lack of technical equipment is so manifest, that to place reliance on his conclusions would be hardly less daring than Mr. Findlay himself has been in arriving at those conclusions. Half-educated and less than half-educated readers — and they are bound to constitute the great bulk of Mr. Findlay's reading public — will unfortunately not realize this. In the field of psychical research Mr. Findlay may be regarded as a specialist, and this is manifest in the very careful and competent way in which he analyses and presents the evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Findlay is convinced that the really valuable contribution which the Christian religion has to make is a psychic contribution — a body of psychical data which proves the existence of the psychic world, our own psychic human nature and our present and future relations with that psychic world — and that it is only the spiritualist who can read and interpret his New Testament aright.

> 'The origin of Christianity can be discovered and understood by all logically-minded people, if they are prepared to accept the fact that the individual mind passes at once from earth to another order of existence, surrounding and interpenetrating this earth, and that it uses as a vehicle a finer, or etheric body, which can be seen at times by those endowed with psychic sight. This etheric body, which interpenetrates our physical body, passes from it at death, and this accounts for the decomposition of the physical body. It is the etheric body which holds the physical particles together. We appear to our friends in the etheric world as we did on earth, but freed from the agedness brought about by the weakness of the flesh. Consequently, if we are

> seen by earth people after death, we can be recognized. This is all important if we are to understand what follows.
>
> So long as the mental attitude is maintained that such ideas are due to hallucination, the origin of the Christian religion is impossible to understand (p. 462 *f.*).

In short,

> 'Without this key of psychic knowledge the quest for the origin of the Christian Faith is hopeless' (p. 462).

Certainly there are many references to, and descriptions of, psychic phenomena in the Old and New Testaments, and they possess, taken as a whole, great didactic value for the reader of the Bible. For they make him conscious of the existence of another world besides this natural world. Mr. Findlay calls this other world the etheric world. We prefer the older term, spiritual world. This world stands in a very close relation to the world of nature. Whether that relation be one of interpenetration or of transcendence, or of a combination of both, we cannot discuss now. Certainly there can be no right understanding of the more profound teaching of the Bible if the student does not recognize the existence of this spiritual world and of man's relation to it.

Here it ought to be noted that psychic phenomena are rather signposts pointing to this spiritual world than the spiritual world itself. When once a man is convinced of the existence of this spiritual world and his relation to it, he is no longer in need of these psychic signposts. Indeed, when in the light of his knowledge of the spiritual world he scrutinizes these psychic signposts he may perhaps come to the conclusion that, although they were signposts to other human beings existing in former ages, they do not really constitute signposts for him, and that if he were to use them, or to direct others to use them to-day, they would prove to be misleading. To-day the road to the spiritual world marked out by the signposts of psychic phenomena may, and do, lead many into a world of comfortable assurance. But we are not convinced that this world of comfortable assurance is the world of spiritual reality. Jesus Christ, who has many claims on human reverence, did not teach men that the world of spiritual reality was reached by the road signposted by psychic phenomena but by the hard and narrow path of moral endeavour and spiritual purity. It seems possible, from the point of view of attaining to this world of spiritual reality, that those who have

supped full of psychic phenomena will find it a very unsubstantial diet for the days of their pilgrimage compared with the Bread of Life which Jesus offered in His Gospel.

We do not deny the reality of psychic phenomena, though many of the accounts of them are incorrect and some even fraudulent — that question is still *sub judice* for scientists. Psychologists and critical historians have made it clear that the popular interpretation of many of these psychic phenomena is erroneous. But granting the truth of some of these, the practical question arises : What is their actual value for life—the highest kind of human life attainable in our present environment?

These psychic phenomena do serve in a number of cases to convince those who would be materialists or sceptics, that there is an unseen world of personal beings, and this provides a very comforting assurance to those who have lost their dear ones and long with all their hearts to rejoin them. But this assurance does not in many cases develop in those who possess it a high level of moral and spiritual living. That is achieved by quite other means which are unveiled for men in the teaching, conduct and character of Jesus Christ as preserved in the Canonical Gospels.

Spiritualism may open for some the gateway to this kind of life, but it does not itself constitute 'the life which is life indeed.' The ability to experience and believe in psychic phenomena are not the tests of that higher life. The sure tests of that higher life are the fit conduct and character of those who are striving to lead it. This point is of supreme importance. For the Gospel of Jesus (and so the very essence of the Christian religion) is not primarily a psychic Gospel, although its records do contain accounts of psychic phenomena and even point to these psychic phenomena as proofs of the truth of the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus is primarily and essentially a moral and spiritual Gospel : it opens with the call to *metanoia*, a moral reformation, the prelude to a life lived on a higher plane, and that plane is moral and spiritual. It is this issue which we fear will not be perceived by the readers of *The Psychic Stream*. With all its abounding information, lucid exposition, comfortable assurance, the readers of this volume may be deluded, under the leadership of Mr. Findlay, into a misinterpretation of the 'real Christian thing.'

Two University dons were discussing the pupil of one of them. The tutor spoke in scathing depreciation of his pupil's scholarship. 'But,' said the other don, 'he does know; his place in the class lists proves that.' 'Yes,' replied the tutor, 'he does know; he knows it all; but he knows it all wrong.'

Truth depends, not simply on getting one's facts right, but also upon getting the interpretation of them right.

There is one significant conclusion which Mr. Findlay's treatment of the Origin and Growth of Christianity must leave on the minds of enlightened and loyal Christian readers. It is the terrible danger to which Christianity is exposed in this modern world by its failure courageously to separate truth from error in its traditional Gospel and openly and resolutely to reject the error, however ancient and however authoritative it may be, as not part of the real Christian religion.

BOOK REVIEWS

TOLLE, LEGE *

To do justice to Dr. Yeaxlee's excellent book, *Religion and the Growing Mind*, would need a longer review than the present one, and a much more erudite reviewer.

Dr. Yeaxlee's aim is threefold: he begins by contending that the conclusions of modern psychologists do not invalidate the claims of religion, as much as the layman has supposed: indeed, to treat 'What the Psychologists say' as a received and consistent body of opinion is misleading. Psychologists differ radically from each other, and from their own previous conclusions about the significance and validity of Religion. According to Dr. Yeaxlee it is possible to recognize in their writings a steady tendency to treat the claims of Religion more seriously. True Religion need not fear the probing analysis of Psychology because, as Dr. William Brown is quoted as saying,

> 'All that analysis does of a destructive kind is to kill false religions, the short-sighted infantile outlook that may have held us back.'

At the same time the layman must, I imagine, beware of assuming too readily that psychologists are in any real sense Christian just because they acknowledge that Religion in some sense of the word is necessary for the life of Man.

* *Religion and the Growing Mind.* By Basil A. Yeaxlee. (Nisbet. 7/6. 1940.)

> 'Two conditions only need fulfilment in order that man may reap the blessings ascribed to communion with God: plasticity in relaxation, and the possession of an ideal of life equivalent to the Christian moral ideal'! (Prof. Leuba.)

But Dr. Yeaxlee deals faithfully and learnedly with Prof. Leuba.

The author's second aim, leading on to the third and final objective, is to show that each stage of growth — infancy, childhood, adolescence early and late — has its specific psychological need; and that this need is truly met, and only truly satisfied, by the Christian attitude towards God which is appropriate to the particular age. In infancy the immense responsibility of parents is finely emphasized. 'God is our Father': appreciation of that great truth depends not so much on the associations we have with the word 'God,' as the associations we have with the word 'father.' Then comes the age which Dr. Yeaxlee calls the age of realism, when the imagination is in abeyance, and the prevailing question is, 'Is it true?' This is the time when the objective reality of God, and the historical character of the Christian revelation, can be so taught as to satisfy that question. The next stage, the age of hero worship, looks for a personality in which to embody a vaguely-felt ideal: 'In Jesus of Nazareth the young adolescent finds reality, character, purpose, action.' And finally the maturing mind looks out on life searching, in a more practical vein, for a cause to serve, an ideal to fight for, a community to join. It is at this stage that the mind may best be guided to the conception of a world-wide Church co-operating to realize a world-wide Kingdom. 'The Church is more than a Divine Creation: it is a psychological necessity.'

Dr. Yeaxlee's two concluding chapters for Parents and Teachers respectively were a real inspiration, at any rate, to one reader, who has responsibilities in both capacities. They are too good to summarize: the reviewer can only say *'Tolle, lege.'*

If the lay schoolmaster can offer any criticism in a book designed for the 'layman,' it would be that there are too many quotations from psychologists, often in that unpleasing jargon which the plain man finds so obscure. But Dr. Yeaxlee no doubt knows what he is about; and no one can accuse him of being unfair to the experts, when he so scrupulously gives their views in their own words. At least, it enables us to see that Dr. Yeaxlee himself can convey his meaning without continual resort to the polysyllabic phrases common to psychological text-books. The reviewer remembers a passage from such a book which meant to say, 'A boy, or girl, can't produce any original piece of work unless he begins by really wanting to,' and it (the book) said, 'The urge towards creative ideation in the adolescent must be primarily volitional.' Why do they talk like that? Dr. Yeaxlee does not.

J. K. Christie.

THE MYSTERY OF THE PROPHETS*

Mr. Oldaker seeks to provide the necessary background to the parts of Jeremiah and contemporary prophets selected by the examiners for the General School Certificate. The chief question to be answered therefore is: Will a pupil who reads, marks and learns this book with an average amount of intelligence satisfy the examiners; and if he reads it specially well, will he gain distinction? I have no doubt whatever as to the answers. If any teacher of Scripture teaches these set passages with this book in his hand and then gets his pupils to read it through, he will meet with well-deserved success.

Mr. Oldaker has done his work admirably—let there be no mistake about that—more, if any author had adopted a different plan, or, having adopted Mr. Oldaker's plan, had worked it out with less skill, the result could not have been so eminently satisfactory. Mr. Oldaker has supplied just the necessary modicum of historical knowledge and of detailed commentary that the pupil needs—and, considering the vast amount of both from which the author had to make his selection, this is no mean achievement.

I certainly have no cause of complaint against the author of this really excellent book, and yet I am profoundly unhappy. I have a most disquieting feeling that the more the pupil knows about such periods as this, the less likely he will be to 'satisfy the examiners.' This is my trouble. Without a knowledge of the great Ritual Pattern of the East, how is anyone to understand what it was against which the great prophets made their protest? This pattern is found in Egypt, on the one hand, and in Mesopotamia on the other; and the recent discoveries at Ras Shamra prove that it was indigenous in Palestine when the Israelites settled there.

This mighty fortress, already ancient and with strength well proved, stood directly in the way of the Prophets, with their revelation of an unseen, ethical, spiritual God, and it was guarded by a powerful order of priests. The prophets never ceased to launch their attacks upon it. They would, if they could have destroyed it utterly—foundations, walls, turrets and bastions. Among these bastions three were called upon to bear the brunt of these prophetic assaults. It is easily possible to make out the general lines on which the conflict developed, though the three bastions of which we speak met with curiously differing fates. They were Kingship; Images; Sacrifices. These three institutions, if they may so be called, were attacked by the prophets for various reasons, but chiefly because they represent aspects of the Ritual Pattern especially abhorrent to discoverers of a Spiritual God—a God of Kindness, Truth and Beauty. The Kingship was opposed because the King *was* the God in the Ritual Pattern. The

* *Old Testament Prophecy.* Part III. By the Reverend W. H. Oldaker. (Martin Hopkinson Ltd. 2/6. 1939.)

attack on the Kingship does not seem to have been fully developed — anyway, the monarchy was established and there is little sign of prophetic opposition to the Kings. Images present us with a different story. Very little is said about them before the time of Isaiah, but they were then declared illegal and we get the strange result of a naturally artistic people living for centuries without the graphic arts. But Sacrifices always raised the anger of the pre-Exilic prophets, and the battle over them raged long and fierce, till Josiah produced his amazing and illogical compromise: a compromise which certainly did not satisfy Jeremiah but which ultimately, as centuries went by, did almost as much for the cause of pure worship and a spiritual religion as anything the prophets could have desired. It is a mistake to regard 621 B.C. as a failure. Unless the strong views of Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah about the sacrificial system are clearly understood, the lines of their attack on the priests are hopelessly blurred, and such verses as Jer. vii, 22, are made almost unintelligible.

Perhaps all this is entirely wrong, but I cannot make sense of the O.T. story on any other lines, and it is time that something sensible and consistent was agreed upon so that schoolmasters can get on with their proper task. Of course, no one supposes that the questions of the day were as clearly cut as I have here indicated, but in dealing with young people our teaching *must* be clear-cut, while at the same time we must continually warn our pupils that we are only able to put before them a small part of a very large whole.

One more point — the idea of progress and development in the O.T. can be easily overdone. Things do not progress with uniformity. Mr. Oldaker takes four prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, and associates the first three names, quite correctly, with Universality, Tenderness, Holiness, while to Jeremiah, again quite correctly, is given the credit for the assertion that God cares for the individual soul. But this is *not* a progressive series — there is no addition sum. Jeremiah's *was* a discovery — and a most important one that set people thinking on new lines, but the other three qualities are merely the personal marks of the three writers, very interesting, very true and very important for the understanding of their books. But where is Micah? He was as great as Amos or Hosea, but this excessive stress upon a progressive series has ruled him out altogether. It may well be doubted if any one of the five regarded himself as an innovator. All tried to recall their people to an understanding of a Spiritual Religion that the Israelites had somehow developed, or begun to develop — perhaps only caught a glimpse of — in the wilderness under the leadership of Moses, before they came into Palestine and got caught by the snares of the Ritual Pattern.

The book is full of good things — quite an astonishing number of them for so short a work.

R. B. Henderson.

THE TEACHER TAUGHT*

What a responsibility the teacher's is! Like Holy Matrimony, it is not to be undertaken unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly. This book has been written for the ever-increasing number of teachers who are asked to give religious instruction, and who want to do so, but through lack of training feel that they are unfit for the task. Mr. Heawood's book will in fact give them a good deal of practical help.

> 'Much of this book,' he says (p. 10) 'is addressed not to the well-equipped student, but to those amateurs who have been confronted with a demand which they would be the last to shirk, and for which they would be the first to admit their own lack of adequacy.'

Fundamentals come first. Religion is rightly considered, not as something apart from life to be taught for one three-quarter hour period a week, but as affecting the whole man; religion is the only thing which will provide the necessary integration of the whole personality; the attitude of this first chapter is the same as that of Mr. M. L. Jacks' recent *God in Education*. I have collected other remarks which will show Mr. Heawood's approach to the question:

> 'Religion will not make contented souls, but it will bring them inner peace' (p. 17); 'The most potent factor in religious education is the community life of the school' (p. 234); 'A really Christian staff is the one convincing form of Christian education' (p. 236); 'The people who can leave others alone and yet profoundly affect them are not too many' (p. 241); 'Ultimately a good school can be felt rather than described' (p. 243).

The book is worth examining chapter by chapter, with such comment as experience affords. Ch. 2 is a dialogue in a masters' common room, concerned with the reactions of members of the staff, representing different points of view, to a proposed discussion on religious education. Ch. 3, on the aim of religious education, continues the analysis of fundamentals. Another interlude of discussion follows, on the lines of Ch. 2; it takes place after the masters' meeting previously mentioned.

The next four chapters are concerned with syllabuses and material for lessons. They cover a very large amount of ground, and a time-range of 11+ to 16 with further suggestions for Sixth Form work up to 18. Many of the suggestions made are excellent; some perhaps over-ambitious. They are rightly concerned in the main with the Old and New Testaments, but they also contain sensible discussions on such subjects as prayer, the divinity of Christ, the place of Christ in secular world history, and similar problems. Mr. Heawood has himself, in all probability, used the whole

* *Religion in School*: a study in method and outlook. By G. L. Heawood. (Student Christian Movement Press. Price 7/6. 1940.)

of this material. Others, with whatever inexperience or ignorance they may begin, will feel that the schemes should be used more after the fashion of a dictionary; and a teacher consults the dictionary for occasional help, but does not attempt to read it through from cover to cover or from A to Z. The Old Testament scheme acknowledges a considerable debt to Professor Marsh and his ideas as set forth in the paper first read to the 'Dons and Beaks' conference in January 1936 and then published in 'Religion and Education' for April of that year. Mr. Heawood is rightly concerned with the need for continuing the story of the Church after 100 A.D. It is so easy, when one uses the Bible only as a text-book (and it is so much the best text-book that one is sorely tempted to do so), to leave the impression that the activity of the Holy Spirit then came to an end. He complains of the lack of a good text-book for class use if the history is continued through the period of the Fathers; he makes some useful suggestions which will help the teacher who is prepared to work things out for himself. He steers a middle course between the suggestions, on the one hand, of those who would make Church History a separate subject, and on the other, of those who consider that secular history is enough; the fact being, that only those teach history fairly and impartially, who see the figure of Jesus Christ in His proper place therein, and God working His purpose out in the affairs of men.

There is an admirably-documented course on the life of Christ for the 13-year-olds, and another, designed for the next two years or so, on the New Testament as the source or sources for the life and teaching of Christ, with a very full discussion on the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount; interest in this naturally begins to awaken at about this age. (A misprint on p. 165 in the spelling of Oxyrhynchus, for which any compositor may be forgiven.) A further course deals with the Christian faith and life as illustrated by the work and letters of St. Paul, and with the development of this faith and life down to the present day. The concluding sections of this course would be very much to the point if inserted into a syllabus of secular history.

The last five chapters deal in compendious fashion with all the problems which come up for discussion wherever men who know the practical difficulties in religious education meet. None of the problems are new, and Mr. Heawood has nothing very startling or fresh to say about them. Should Scripture be an examination subject or not? There is much to be said on both sides; some feel that they can take a more intelligent interest in it without examinations in prospect; others, that in an examination-ridden world, if you leave Scripture out it tends to be forgotten altogether. None will dispute that there is much to be gained by a thorough knowledge of at least one Gospel, and, if an intelligent Old Testament syllabus is adopted (like that of the prophetic periods in the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board syllabus) even School Certificate Divinity can be made into a

most useful piece of education. Mr. Heawood also has something to say on the usual subjects which first vex immature minds; miracles, the inspiration of the Bible, the place of prayer, the Christian doctrines of Heaven and Hell. His chapter on school worship is not a very satisfactory treatment of a very difficult subject; his treatment is mainly psychological, which may not be the best approach. It is no use looking for adult understanding or adult experience in a collection of boys, and where few adults really understand the meaning of worship it is not to be expected that many boys will. Girls (probably because they come to maturity so much quicker) often understand worship better than boys.

There are appendices on the Institute of Christian Education (which may serve to introduce that valuable body to some who have not yet met it); on Vacation Courses; on Forms of Service for School Worship; a bibliography, and a very small index.

W. H. Oldaker.

THE CASE FOR KING CHARLES*

The judgments of posterity are subject to revision. The case of Caesar *v.* Brutus is still litigating among the learned; so is the case of Charles I versus his Parliaments. The High Court of Justice condemned Charles to death as a Traitor and Tyrant; within a dozen years such of its members as had not sought safety in flight were themselves executed as traitors. Clarendon calls their judgment on their king 'a horrible sentence upon the most innocent person in the world,' and the execution of the Royal Martyr 'the most execrable murder that ever was committed since that of our Blessed Saviour.' The Service for the thirtieth of January elaborates the theme, and though its disuse was enjoined by Royal authority in 1858, the festival of Saint Charles was celebrated, we are informed, in some Cornish churches in the present year. The Church of England, at any rate, has reason to be grateful to Charles; it came as a tremendous surprise to the English people and impressed them enormously that the King of England thought the Church of England worth dying for.

Each generation sees the past through its own atmosphere. The Victorians were constitutionalists, they believed in freedom slowly broadening down from precedent to precedent, and hailed the Puritans as pilgrim fathers along the road which leads by devious stages to the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world. They even tried to think of them as pioneers of religious toleration, though as Mr. Cooke says quite truly, 'Not only would Pym have banned the Papists, he would have banned all but the Calvinists. Charles and the Bishops stood for a relative freedom' (p. 33).

* *Charles I and His Earlier Parliaments.* By Harold P. Cooke, M.A. (Sheldon Press. 1939. 7/6.)

Mr. Cooke, however, does not deal with the whole case; he confines himself to a simple issue: Was it Charles or the Parliament who began the quarrel which ended so tragically at Whitehall? He submits that the fault lay with Pym and Eliot and their following, who first forced the king into a war and then refused to vote the supplies necessary for carrying it on.

It all began with that unfortunate country Czecho-Slovakia — Bohemia they called it then. The Bohemian Protestants elected Frederick, Elector Palatine and son-in-law of James, their king, and Wotton wrote the sonnet, 'To my Mistress Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia.' Frederick, however, was a poor stick and lost not only Bohemia but his hereditary dominions as well. The Thirty Years' War began, which destroyed a larger proportion of Europeans than the last Great War. James, 'that eminent Gamaliel,' as his son calls him (p. 20), wanted to keep out of it and succeeded till the last year of his reign, when a rather silly squabble about his son's marriage with the Spanish Infanta involved him in hostilities. Then he died, leaving debts, an empty exchequer, and the fatal legacy of his favourite, the Duke of Buckingham.

Mr. Cooke's book deals with the next two years. He proves to his own satisfaction, and, we think, to that of his readers, if they have the conscientious industry to read the carefully documented account of the proceedings of the first Parliaments of the reign, that the dominant party in the Commons were false to their solemn pledges; having brought the Crown into war they refused supplies and tried to starve the King out. Mr. Cooke brings charges of inaccuracy against the eminent pundit, Samuel Rawson Gardiner, and apparently substantiates them.

We cannot say that the book is very easy reading. 'I am asking that the reader should put himself back again into the past or suppose he was now living there. He will find it, I think, fascinating.' We suppose he would, if he had enough imagination. But, to tell the truth, the long-winded snuffle of the parliamentary orators is intolerably dull.

Of course that is not Mr. Cooke's fault. But we think he might make a little more allowance for the not unnatural suspicion that Charles like his father was still hankering after 'appeasement' and was not whole-hearted in the Protestant cause. Parliament must have thought too that the poverty of the Crown was due in part to the lavish grants made to the Duke of Buckingham. In the unhappy divisions in which England was torn asunder and which have left scars on the body politic to this day there was, as in all human quarrels, a large element of genuine misunderstanding. Godliness was not all on the side of the Puritans, nor loyalty on that of the Royalists. 'God with us' is a mistaken battlecry; we should endeavour to be on the side of God, yet feel all the time that God may have ends in view which are quite out of the range of our vision.

GAMALIEL MILNER.

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMMUNITY *

The last war created a faith, which we now know was pathetic, in the application of intellectual propositions to remedy the world's ills. Principles and arrangements had only to be proclaimed, the bureau and committee formed, and hey presto! the new world would appear. Christians were not exempt from being deluded with this pathetic fallacy. There existed, as there should always exist, a sincere conviction that Christians are called not to attempt to escape from the world's ills but to face them somehow, that the world would only respond to the demands of Christ, if it could see tangible fruits in a just order and the possibilities of a happier community. It was inevitable that the various forms of remedies which appeared to be a systematic prescription on paper should attract the ardent Christian reformer. Communism, socialism, the Douglas social credit system, syndicalism were each in turn held to be *the* Christian remedy. Conferences and blue books were the order of the day. And while this, now that, was held to be the Christian solution of the world's problems, those problems grew more insoluble and covetousness, lust, and greed refused to submit to the frame of the plans offered.

The experience of the last twenty years has taught the Christian Churches that there is no framework which they can produce labelled the Christian solution of the world's problems and impose upon the forces of evil, thereby making them the forces of righteousness. The authors of *Christians in Society* have profited by this experience: their aims are much less ambitious: they are content not to prescribe a scheme for a Christian society but to attempt to define the duty of Christians in a world to a large extent indifferent, to some extent hostile to Christianity. They point out that there is no warrant in the religion of the New Testament for building an ethical and social code upon the teaching of Jesus either literally or freely interpreted. The Gospel is a proclamation of good news, a revelation of God's nature and His relations with men through the facts of the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Gospel is mediated to us through the witness of these who first accepted it. Christians cannot impose that revelation upon those who refuse to accept it; they cannot even find from it any universal prescription for the world's social ills which only lacks acceptance. For their own perception of that revelation is still partial and clouded because they are still human, while love does not yet reign supreme even in their personal relationships. Not even to the saint is the will of God infallibly disclosed. The Christian can only in the political sphere choose from the alternatives of action presented to him in the situation, in which he happens to find himself, the one which appears to him to accord with his loyalty to the Christ-revealed God. That choice will

* *Christians in Society*. By Edwin Parker and Ronald Preston. (Student Christian Movement Press. 5/-. 1939.)
Jesus the Heretic. By Conrad Noel. (Dent. 5/- net. 1939.)

accord best which is found to fulfil the claims of justice, to check the forces of evil, and to increase the living-space of love. The writers proceed to trace how the fulcrum of political power has shifted from the individual to organised groups. Effective action in the political sphere can only be undertaken within a group and therefore he who wishes to be effective must partake in politics. The Christian should aim at the maintenance of justice between these groups and their demands upon the individuals within them. To refuse to choose where these groups make a demand upon us is to remove God from history: to identify one's choice with the will of God is to identify God with history. But Christians are not bound to agree because they will not weigh up the situation with any impersonal measure; times and circumstances change, and all judgments are partial and liable to error. The authors point out that the Churches must always have their own houses set in order and avoid coming under the protection of a powerful group, if Christians are to be at all effective. Research is needed not to provide plans of action but to keep abreast of the knowledge of the day and that individual Christians may have their attention focussed. What is demanded from the Christian is an attention to the personal factors in the situation in which he happens to be. *Christians in Society* deserves to be widely read for its sanity and perspective, its combination of enthusiasm and reasonableness. Too long has discussion of Christianity and politics revolved round the extremes of accepting things as they are with hopes that they would gradually become better, and the presentation of paper schemes and plans as the Christian solution of the world's social and economic problems. Here it is seen that the Christian must be a revolutionary, but a revolutionary well aware of his own fallibility; that to the Christian as well as to the scientist risk and error are realities in life which not even the Christian revelation can eliminate.

Jesus the Heretic, by Conrad Noel, yields more entertainment but less practical reasoning than *Christians in Society*. In a series of essays on a variety of themes Conrad Noel sets out to show that Christian orthodoxy is not identical with conventionalism and conservatism. That may be readily granted, but Christian orthodoxy cannot be identified with any programme or party, however unconventional may be the programme or however extreme the party. Where Conrad Noel criticises as a Christian he will find agreement; where he constructs he will find both Christians and experts who will point out that sufficient account is not taken of that human sinfulness which generates that very conventionalism so often identified with the Christian religion. Conrad Noel is here as ever challenging and sincere. He compels all his readers who profess to be Christian to ask themselves if the Christian Churches can throw off the yoke which they have borne from the compromise so favourable to the world given to the Church by Constantine. Messrs. Preston and Barker have, we believe, shown the only way in which that yoke can be thrown off. H. C. Snape.

A REVOLUTION BY CONSERVATIVES*

The last hundred years has seen a revolution in theology. Modern science has shown that the world order is not what Christian theologians thought it was. Christian theories of the creation and the fall, of miracles and the divine governance of the world, need thorough reformulation. Secondly, the application of scientific methods to the study of the Bible and the history of Christian doctrine has shown that the foundations of the older systems of theology are unsound. New ones are necessary. The Christian theologian is surrounded by heaps of ruins, which might be the result of an earthquake or raids by bombing aeroplanes. The need of to-day is for theological reconstruction. But how is one to pick one's way among the débris, and distinguish the rubbish from the sound material for a new building?

One must understand the old before one can build the new. The late Dr. F. H. Foster gives valuable help in this work through his posthumous book, *The Modern Movement in American Theology*, a volume showing unusual powers of exposition, candour and much insight. He begins his story in the 1860's and carries it down to 1914. It is chiefly concerned with men and movements within the Congregational Church. Dr. Foster gives the reason for this.

> 'It has been their (Congregationalists) good fortune to be free churches, free from ecclesiastical control.' He adds, 'The great closely organized churches like the Presbyterian and Episcopalian cannot pass through a course of peaceful evolution in doctrine.'

Perhaps Dr. Foster's 'cannot' is an exaggeration, unless he would say that the history of Modernism in the English Church has not been 'peaceful.' But the slow progress of Modernism shows how much creeds and fixed forms of worship retard advance. The story is very different in the Unitarian Churches, which have no creeds.

Dr. Foster is concerned with three main topics—evolution, Biblical criticism, and the creeds. Evolution came first, and, in spite of Tennessee, its assimilation into modern theology has been most thorough and most successful. With Biblical criticism the story is different. Progress has been slow, especially in the New Testament. Miracles again do not receive candid and thorough treatment till the end of the period.

To-day, evolution is rather *vieux jeu* to the theologian, and Dr. Foster has not much to record respecting Biblical criticism. His third topic—the creeds—is of more immediate interest. Since Congregationalists have nothing corresponding to the Thirty-nine Articles or the Westminster Confession, and do not repeat the creeds in public worship, they have more readily assumed a critical and even hostile attitude towards them. Theo-

* *The Modern Movement in American Theology*. By F. H. Foster. (Revell and Co. 1.75 dollars. 1939.)

logians said that Trinitarian speculations were futile, and that it was due to historical causes, not philosophical necessity, that early Christian thinkers were Trinitarian. The Incarnation also received radical treatment. American Liberals rightly saw very soon that the right approach to the problem of Christ's two natures is through his full humanity. But they were not so successful in solving the question of his divinity. One feels that if they had been better acquainted with the history of Christian doctrine they would have treated the creeds with more respect and their own conclusions would have been more valuable.

Dr. Foster remarks upon the extreme conservatism of the Liberal thinkers his book describes, and their frequent lack of thoroughness. The lack of thoroughness is due partly to the fact that many of them were pastors and preachers, without the leisure or opportunities for careful and prolonged study, which University professors, for instance, ought to enjoy. The reason for their conservatism is that, as we can now see, they were leaders in the greatest revolution which Christian thought has known. In conclusion, Dr. Foster says that the theological reconstruction, so much needed to-day, is beyond the power of a single mind. Many workers are needed to explore various fields before the material will be ready for the new building. Modernists will agree; they will add that relief from the present confusion will not come from clever special pleaders, but from men who are as honest, candid and straightforward as Dr. Foster.

J. K. NETTLEFOLD.

HOW TO SALVAGE DEMOCRACY*

This book will not please Marxists, Fascists, Labour Socialists, Liberals, Tories, nor yet the upholders and practitioners of our present academic education. Thus the thoughts expressed in it are well termed 'dangerous,' because many will be upset by them. But dangerous or not, the book is full of ideas, vitality and optimism. It is not the wail of one of our disillusioned idealists.

Its thesis is that science has created new possibilities for the welfare of mankind which our leaders in politics and education have neither the imagination nor the knowledge to grasp, still less the initiative to exploit. Professor Hogben's first demand is for a *New Social Contract* involving a scientific investigation of the common material needs of mankind, a systematic inventory of the resources available, and a realistic survey of how far present social institutions contribute to or militate against the full use of those resources. He maintains that at present the progressive outlook is in eclipse because those who have adopted it have not been scientifically minded, knowing next to nothing of the resources which scientific technology has placed within our reach, and thus unable to inaugurate the Age of

* *Dangerous Thoughts.* By Lancelot Hogben. (Allen and Unwin. 8/6. 1939.)

Plenty which the idealists have dreamt of and the scientists could bring into being if they were allowed.

Hence the really important cultural task for the present time is to provide guidance for constructive innovations. 'All good education is propaganda,' remarks Professor Hogben, and this is by no means the philistine utterance it might appear. What is meant is that all *living* education is education with a vital purpose. Our present Classical education dates from times when a knowledge of Latin and Greek was a solvent of Catholic dogma. The knowledge of the ancient languages and the culture there embodied was a *weapon* of liberation. One only has to read Milton to realise this; in his day learning had most interest for those who were socially alive because learning was demolishing an old world and building a new one. Is that the rôle of classical studies to-day? On the contrary: 'the intellectual training of the prosperous middle class in our own time can give them little assistance in understanding their own social destiny.' And the pity of it is that even the admirable Adult Education Movement is too apt to be satisfied with retailing culture which is socially irrelevant. Working people should not be content 'to take from the universities the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table.' They need expert knowledge from the universities; but given that knowledge, and the courage and skill to use it, they will create their own culture, or the conditions for it.

The standpoint of the culture of our governing class has never been scientific. Gladstone, at a time when cables were carrying messages across oceans, could ask Faraday whether electricity had a use. A predominantly legal or philosophical training may produce a statesman with high ideals, but he will be ignorant of the technical forces which really control social relations.

The consequences are serious, because the leaders of both Right and Left parties in Britain are equally indifferent to the technical possibilities of science. The policy of the latter would appear to be the nationalising of superannuated industries just due for collapse (as if the hansom cab industry had been nationalised in the year 1900), and the saddling of a non-rationalised, non-scientific industry with social charges that it cannot carry. A policy of ignorance if not of imbecility. Is it any wonder, then, that democracy should be discredited? It cannot guarantee the majority of citizens an adequate share in the benefits rendered possible by advancing knowledge and improved technical skill. Thus intelligent people begin to wonder whether political democracy is not a sham, and a disgusted and exploited middle class turns to Fascism in sheer resentment. But there should be hope for democracy if it were not afraid of applied science.

> 'The task of salvaging democracy is a positive one. We shall not resist the challenge of dictatorship and the downward path from militarism to barbarism if we are content to defend a democracy which has

ceased to satisfy the social aspirations of men and women. The educational task is to canalize the will to constructive social innovation by asserting the reasonable grounds for hopefulness in the human experiment, and to distribute knowledge which can be instrumental in the co-operative task of social reconstruction.'

Professor Hogben does not leave the matter in the air, but makes one or two concrete suggestions. He would like to see representative government reformed in such a way as to enable it to take advantage of expert knowledge. He would like to see a Ministry of Nutrition, and a permanent National Planning Council as envisaged by Sir Daniel Hall, to be made up of 'outstanding (and upstanding) chemists, engineers, and agriculturalists.' It should have power to reserve for the nation a first option of all patents (such as are 'frozen' at present, lest they threaten vested interests) and suggests immediate steps to create socialised industries to exploit new discoveries. He would also have 'a second chamber of experts co-opted to place their gifts at the disposal of the nation.' Something of the kind has already been done in Sweden.

This book was finished before the war broke out, but publication took place after the war had begun. It is the kind of book which people should be reading now to help them to form plans for the post-war world. And one feels that some of its advice and principles might even now be put into practice. J.C.H.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

SATANISM.

Sir,

Many people feel that in the terrorism and general moral deterioration of the day we are faced by a veritable 'Satanism.' We may, indeed, use such terms as devilish, diabolical or Satanic to express our abhorrence of something shocking or supernally evil, but some go further and seem to believe that in opposition to God and to all that makes for Good there is actually an evil Power. But any such Dualism, if at all seriously thought out, is soon found to lead to incoherent conceptions of the Universe; it is incompatible with any spiritual conviction; it is philosophically untenable. None the less, what we call 'Satanism' cannot be readily dismissed.

Dualism, like Polytheism, cuts the knots, it does not untie them; whereas in the past Israel's monotheizing idealism began to force a more coherent and co-ordinated explanation of good and evil. It enriched religious thought. The evidence is familiar, and it is to be observed that a thorough-going monotheism compels a more penetrating enquiry into the nature of God, the Universe and ourselves. Thus not only have we to understand how God could ever be said to move David to sin (*II Sam.* xxiv, 1; Satan in *I Chron.* xxi, 1), harden men's hearts (*Ex.* iv, 21), or lay stumbling-blocks (*Jer.* vi, 21), we have also to ask—if we are monotheists—whether we, like Israel of old, can really see God to-day working out His purposes, disciplining men and peoples and using them as His instruments. To be sure, the ancient writers did not recognize secondary causes. They believed

that God sent misfortunes as well as benefits (*Job* ii, 10), and that He grieved when His own beloved people suffered disastrously for their faults (*Hosea* and, later, *II Esdras*). But most impressive for the psychology of religion is the 'coincidence,' the subtle relationship between a man's *psyche* and what God means for him, so that God answers to a man's character and the latter conditions God's dealings with him (*cf. Ps.* xviii, 24 *sqq.*). Thus when God is said to 'harden' a man's heart, we can find a psychological explanation — and this at once increases human responsibility! 'Sin's punishment is its own increase' (Garvie on *Rom.* i, 24), and, in general, men by their life and thought testify implicity or explicitly to their convictions of Ultimate Reality, whether it be an impersonal process or a personal power.

Comparative religion abundantly illustrates the ranges of the religious consciousness and the evil that has been wrought in the name of Religion or with its acquiescence. There is a vital difference between a genuine subjective religious feeling and the objective value of its fruits, for what may *seem* to be 'religious' may be the worst enemy of a progressive religion. A perverse religion or idealism by its phraseology and subjective assurance bewilders and seduces men when criteria and standards are lacking. In fact, the psychology of religion raises most fundamental problems. The gulf between men, even the highest, and the God whose essential transcendence they ignore, is a theme running through the Bible: we recall the king of Tyre (*Ezek.* xxviii), Nebuchadrezzar, and the 'Fall of Lucifer' (*Is.* xiv, 12). But even 'false' prophets, Messiahs or 'divine' leaders were not necessarily hypocrites, and Nebuchadrezzar has left us an affecting little prayer and—like Saul—had a reputation for good works. If the enigmatic despised 'Servant' of *Is.* liii, 4 suffered from what looked like a divine judgement, at once we think of the story of Uzziah's leprosy and punishment for taking too much upon himself (*II Chron.* xxvi, 18-20). Thence we pass on to Miriam's leprosy, also a penalty (*Num.* xii, 10), and the ideas underlying the complex story of the revolt of Karah (*Num.* xvi, 3, etc.). Indeed, there is the obscure tradition that Moses and Aaron suffered because in some way they did not 'sanctify' Yahweh (*Num.* xx, 12), and the nature of the offence recalls the Herod who 'gave not God the glory' and perished miserably (*Acts* xii, 22 *sq.*). Truly the evidence is strange!

Now comparative religion reflects the complementary conceptions of *Mana*, or supernatural power, and *Tabu*, or the necessary precautions and conditions. There is superhuman aid to be had—conditionally; and the risk and danger of entering the realm of the sacred and holy is multifariously emphasized. Men have broken some *Tabu* and have even died, overwhelmed at the knowledge of their offence: such is the interaction of the physical and the psychical. A Jerubbaal overthrows the altar of Baal with impunity (*Judges* vi, 31); but is it always safe to destroy the old sacred places (the point in *II Kings* xviii, 22)? Indeed, there have been tragedies where men have suffered grievously for overstepping the mark and in some way erring against a Law and a Power higher than themselves. Our writers on psycho-analysis and the psychology of religion barely touch the fringe of a tremendous subject which comes to the front to-day—the problem of 'true' and 'false' leaders, prophets and Messiahs.

Of all the tragedies in history the greatest is surely that of Israel. We follow the growth and the purging of her religion, her claim to a unique relationship with her God, the discipline it entailed, the later splendid revival under the Maccabees—and, finally, the catastrophic end at the rise of Christianity. A body strong in the consciousness of the past and its

promise, but with false ideas of a new era, found itself thwarted by Rome and gradually superseded by a new and growing religion with a future before it. It is easy, therefore, to understand that there were 'Satanic Jewish *émeutes*' as the old Israel saw the frustration of its hopes.[1] And though we may prefer to dwell upon those splendid Jewish figures who helped to revive Judaism, the history in and behind the Jewish and Christian movements to introduce a new order should be borne in mind to-day. Here is the tragedy of the election and rejection of the old Israel. Like Moses and Aaron, it did not bring a people into the Promised Land; and it is the transcendence of God over his 'first-born' Israel and her chosen leaders that is reiterated when St. Paul warns the new Israel against false pride and 'glorifying' (*Rom.* xi, 17 *sqq.*).

Men, going far outside the normal, reach great heights or sink to the lowest depths, and both at the rise of Christianity and, earlier, round about the Exilic Age (the age of the 'Servant') are similar religious phenomena and conditions of disintegration. At the present, the third similar period, whatever the psychological parallels, no one expects history to repeat itself baldly. Now in cosmic history we recognize what has been styled the 'creation of creators'; and, in fact, Nature's wonderful inventiveness, and the astonishing, the disturbing, and even the malignant efficiency of her creatures point to an actual power or energy which, viewed absolutely, is neither good nor evil, neither Divine nor Satanic. But it is a reality to be faced very seriously, for when we pass to the dawn of man and human creativeness we witness the many devices, admirable or horrible as the case may be, to maintain and enrich the tribal or national organisms. There are aberrations, and from time to time the organisms—from whatever cause—decay and vanish. Hence much that we call 'Satanic' is due to the fact that man is not yet truly human; he is still the brute, Nature's latest offspring, but with increasing capacity for good and evil.

With the disintegration of older ways of life and thought others make their appearance, and only the fittest will survive. There are men who would go back to Nature and explore the abysses of the *psyche*; and the 'racial soul' of Germany, like certain phases of Wagner, and like jazzing and crooning, is as non-human and sub-human as the finest creations, whether of a Bach or of the loftiest spirituality, are super-national and universal. At certain stages in individual and national growth the soul needs a resting-place, a guide, a super-personal relationship. Self-realisation and self-surrender become one, and the day must surely come when Christianity must wake up from its dogmatic slumbers and bestir itself to aid an ailing world. It is easy for us to-day to see how in the past men could speak of the 'prince of this world' (*John* xii, 31), the 'god of this age' (*II Cor.* iv, 4), or an 'aeon of evil' (*Gal.* i, 4). But the foe is not supernatural, although, the more correctly we diagnose the disease and find a 'natural' cause, the more shall we need superhuman help. We need to take a wide and deep view of the world-situation, for what we call 'Satanism' can be cast out only by a reinvigorated Christianity. Ideologies and *-isms* abound, which we repudiate; but they are successfully and finally superseded only by what we feel and find to be true. And when we speak of Divine Love as the ultimate principle of the Universe, it is a reality that is most keenly realized perhaps when men know that they have been saved from themselves. That is, indeed, the task of Christianity, to save the world from itself, a task for which Christianity has yet to fit itself.

STANLEY COOK.

26 Lensfield Road, Cambridge.

[1] The words are A. Toynbee's, *A Study of History*, v. 387.

THE BANKRUPTCY OF PACIFISM.

SIR,

I much regret that illness, etc., has prevented me from attempting an answer to two questions which have appeared in your pages, which are very much to the point, and which most certainly deserve a careful reply.

The questions are (1) from your leader of December, 1939 (p. 466), 'How are we to defeat Hitlerism without the use of force? That is the crux'; and (2) from 'Practical Peace-Maker's' letter in the February, 1940, number (p. 202), 'What better could we have done under the circumstances which existed on September 3rd, 1939?'

I am as anxious as the questioners that a fair, non-evasive answer should be given to these questions, and that in the interests of truth we may get down to the fundamental point which divides us on the pacifist issue. But, in passing, I don't know that I would be prepared to admit the pragmatic doctrine that a thing is true because it happened to work out in practice, but would submit that a thing is true because it is in the Divine Mind, however much in practice it may seem to fail (*cf.* the whole doctrine of the Cross). That is to say, the fact that war stopped war or Hitlerism, or that pacifism stopped war or Hitlerism, would not prove the *truth* of either method, but only its expediency.

However, I would humbly attempt a reply to the two very pertinent questions above, and in the interests of space consider them as one and the same question, 'What else could we do in the circumstances in September, 1939?' I hope that is fair.

Surely the whole difficulty lies in the entirely unintentional ambiguity of the question, 'What should *we* do?' By the word 'we' do you mean the British nation or the Catholic Church? Of course, if one says that the two are identical, there is no more to be said. It is a position quite unintelligible to me, and I should have thought that the fact that 80 per cent. of the populace are outside the organized Churches, and that the recent remarkable letter to *The Times* on Christian education has caused such concern, simply must have led to a different conclusion.

And so, in answer to the question 'What else could we do?' I would reply that if by 'we' you mean 'the British nation,' then according to its lights at the present time, *i.e.* according to the nation's present grasp of Divine Truth, it acted rightly and nobly, for the nation as a whole obviously believes that you can only meet evil with evil, and that you can only impose righteousness by violence, and that therefore there is just nothing else to do. As long as people sincerely believe that, all honour to them in putting it into practice, and as a parson I say to the young men in my parish who come to me before they join up, 'If *to you* it is right, then go right ahead and all honour to you, and may God bless you and bring you back safely'; but I always add, 'but for God's sake don't say that the Church egged you on,' for I know that, should this war last many years, nothing will so make the young men blaspheme God and His Church in the days of disillusionment as the belief that it was at God's wish that they went. As long as the nation believes that evil can only be met by evil, then according to its lights it is right and noble to act as it has done, but it should be realized that this belief is shared by Hitler, and by all nations throughout history (pagan or so-called Christian), and has nothing whatsoever to do with Christianity *as such*.

But, if in the question 'What else could we do?' you mean by 'we' the Catholic Church, I feel most strongly that the answer is entirely different.

I would submit that the Christ brought on earth a new ethic, and, although we pacifists are ashamed at the inadequacy of our attempts to put it into practice, at least we believe it is the Truth (whether it works or not). It runs through the whole of His life, His teaching and His passion, and can be summed up by the terms 'Hate must be met by Love; Evil must be met by Good; and violence by non-violent resistance.' He prayed that His followers might be 'one,' 'that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.' And just as it was unthinkable that the first Apostles, had they been of different nationalities, would have slaughtered each other at the command of their states, so it is unthinkable that the Catholic Church of to-day should tolerate such schism amongst its members without protest. And that is the pacifist case. We say you are wrecking the Church at the command of the State. And, in the final analysis, the effectiveness of the Church should surely be of far more importance to the earnest Christian man than the effectiveness of the State?

And so, in answer to the question 'What else could we members of the Catholic Church do?' I would say that, instead of going to war amongst ourselves and learning how to bomb, bayonet, torpedo and gas each other, let us show 'the world' that we would rather lose everything than behave in that way, that 'the world may know that Thou hast sent Me.' We should continue our ordinary Christian activities, which, if they had any value in peace time, should not be of any less value in war time. We should help the lads who are rather inarticulately trying to witness to these things before the tribunals, and we should let it be quite clearly and unequivocably known that we Christians value our Church before our country. Forgive me for saying that that is not very evident just now.

The nation on the whole is not in the least likely to practise non-violent resistance probably for several hundred years, if ever, but members of the Church Catholic within the various nations can do so. After all, it was effective under Ghandi in South Africa, and has only been ineffective in India when violence has crept in. But whether it be effective or not is irrelevant. It is part and parcel of the way of life taught and practised by Christ, and should be taught and practised by the Church. Neither must we mix the issues by saying that we would practise it if other nations would do the same. No nation is likely to practise it (though it would light such a candle, if it did, that would never be put out). But we, the Christian Church, are not to wait for other nations, but rather to show them the way. We must learn to practise non-violent resistance now amongst ourselves, to be prepared to sacrifice (*if necessary*) more than the soldier, and without bloodshed, and to make it quite clear that under no circumstances do we kill and slaughter each other (or anyone else) because Our Lord has prayed that we might be 'one,' 'that the world might know that Thou hast sent Me.' Then we, the Catholic Church, instead of fighting amongst ourselves with weapons of the devil, will be free to fight aggressively against the evil in the world with the weapons of the spirit. There is abundant scope around us at our very doors for practical answers to the question 'What else could the Church do?'

And the fact that there is a war on, and that evil is therefore getting intensified, makes it all the more important that the Church sticks to its job of fighting that evil with the weapons of the Spirit, rather than leaving it to go to some distant country to fight amongst itself with the weapons of the devil. For, however good the cause may be, if we take the latter course we definitely show to the world that we are not 'one'; we dissipate our energies for the real fight against evil by going off to kill the wrong people;

and we give to the world its grandest opportunity of rejecting Christianity by offering them the argument which already they are not slow to use, 'In what way do these Christians differ from us?'

W. MAULEVERER,
Vicar of St. Francis', Salisbury.

[The issue reached seems to be whether the Christian State in combatting evil ought to be restricted to the methods of the Christian Church, which are those of teaching, persuasion, example, prayer. Mr. Mauleverer seems to maintain that the Christian State is so restricted. We are compelled to maintain that the Christian State is not so restricted, but that when moral forces have failed the Christian State not only may, but ought, in the last resort to make use of physical forces. ED.,—*M.C.*]

A FIXED EASTER AND CALENDAR REFORM.

SIR,

It may be true that the fixing of Easter cannot be separated from a reform of the calendar, but it does not follow that reform of the calendar cannot be separated from the fixing of Easter. In the sixteenth century the date of Easter and calendar reform were aspects of one and the same problem, because, owing to the accumulation of small errors, there was obvious disagreement between the records of the calendar and the sun, which in 1581 seriously upset the date of Easter. The correction of these errors has turned the problem into two: to meet the demand of the business world for a reformed calendar and the popular demand for fixing the date of a spring holiday in April, and though this is generally voiced as a demand for a fixed Easter, neither has any necessary connexion with the Church festival.

The association in the public mind of calendar reform with a fixed Easter is due to the action of Parliament in 1871 in linking the bank holidays with the Church festivals, a fortuitous and quite unnecessary connexion. Parliament was concerned with the establishment of annual holidays to be spaced at the most convenient intervals, and the dates should have been decided solely on this consideration. The unfortunate consequence is that calendar reform is being held up because this connexion involves the dates of religious observances and has given rise to objections on the part of the Roman Church and of the Jewish community, though there is no reason why these should not freely observe days of their own choosing under a reformed calendar. The Jewish objection was expressed by the Chief Rabbi some time ago in a letter to the *Times*; it arises out of the proposed insertion of intercalary days, which is supposed to involve a change in the regular sequence of the seventh day Sabbath. It is difficult to see why the insertion of New Year's Eve as a *dies non*, involving changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Friday for twelve months, should be unwelcome to the Jews.

If the problem of the reform of the calendar were dissociated from the fixing of Easter, no Christian religious observances would be involved and a reconsideration might remove the Jewish prejudices; calendar reform would then have some chance of attaining early success.

J. R. FOSTER.

Upton, Northampton.
March 26th, 1940.